DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 134 170 IR 004 333

AUTHOR Fisher, C. Daniel; Dean, Dwight G.
TITLE The Realism of Marital and Parental Roles on Television; A Research Report.
INSTITUTION Saint Lawrence Univ., Canton, N. Y.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 26p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Behavior Change; *Commercial Television; *Content Analysis; Family Role; Norms; Parent Child Relationship; Parent Role; *Role Models; *Role Perception; *Television Research; Television Viewing

ABSTRACT

Programs broadcast by the three major television networks that portrayed contemporary American families were analyzed for one week to discern the frequency of specified televised marital and parental role behaviors. The purpose of this content analysis was to determine what behaviors the television spouses displayed toward each other and toward their children. Televised marital and parental role behaviors are usually conflict free emphasizing affectionate and altruistic concerns for one's spouse and children. According to the cultural norms theory, television can influence viewers' behavior patterns by structuring its "messages" in certain repetitive ways. These marital and parental role behaviors on television can serve as imitative models for the viewer, enabling him to learn appropriate behavior for future use. (Author)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED134170

The Realism of Marital and Parental Roles on Television

A Research Report

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

C. DANIEL FISHER*

and

DWIGHT G. DEAN**

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
C. Daniel Fisher

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

*Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
St. Lawrence University, Canton, N.Y. 13617

** Professor, Department of Sociology
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50010

IR004333

Abstract

The Realism of Marital and Parental

- Roles on Television

Programs broadcast by the three major television networks that portrayed contemporary American families were analyzed for one week to discern the frequency of specified televised marital and parental role behaviors. The purpose of this content analysis was to determine what behaviors the television spouses displayed toward each other and toward their children. Televised marital and parental role behaviors are usually conflict free emphasizing affectionate and altruistic concerns for one's spouse and children. According to the cultural norms theory, television can influence viewers' behavior patterns by structuring its "messages" in certain repetitive ways. These marital and parental role behaviors on television can serve as imitative models for the viewer, enabling him to learn appropriate behavior for future use.

The Realism of Marital and Parental Roles on Television

Relatively little scientific attention has been directed toward the mass medium of television. Yet this medium is ubiquitious, especially in the United States. In 1963, Appell indicated that there were more homes with television sets than phones, cars, bath tubs, or refrigerators. As of April 1970, 96% of all households in the United States had at least one set: 29% had two or more (Statistical Abstract, 1972: 497). By household annual income, of families having less than $3,000 income in 1971, 77% had at least one black and white set: 16% had a color set. Of those families having incomes of $25,000 and over, 82% had black and white sets while 79% had color sets (Statistical Abstract, 1972: 328).

The amount of television viewing in any given home is more important than its presence per se. LoSciuto (1972:54) indicated that in his sample of some 250 families, the median viewing time per day was 183 minutes or 3 hours and three minutes. On the average, an adult in the United States will spend ten years of his life before the set (Looney, 1971). "Television has become a habit: it has taken up more than its share of the increasing leisure (free) time" (Meyersohn, 1957: 360). "Television takes up more American leisure time than any other activity" (Rosenberg and White, 1957: 11). Nicholas Johnson (1970: 14) a former FCC commissioner comments: "By the time they (pre-schoolers) enter first grade, they will have received more hours of instruction from television networks than they will later receive from college profs while earning a bachelor's degree" (1970: 14). In light of the preceding information, as well as other similar materials, many

people are concerned about the impact of television on the viewer as well as society at large.

There are many and varied opinions regarding the impact of television on its viewers. These include arguments that television viewing is biologically dangerous because of X-ray emissions; it creates passivity in the viewer; and it debases culture (Meyersohn, 1957: 345). Anders contends that now each individual is treated as a mass man, all being served the same identical product. "The individuality of each human being is being erased in the comforts of the living room rocker" (1957: 360). Larsen has indicated several effects of mass communication of which television is one important medium. These include:

1. Mass communication has not only introduced new content into the patterns of conversation and interpersonal interaction but has also become a force for the standardization of basic speech patterns and other language habits.

2. Mass communication has altered family patterns. The media challenge traditional lines of authority by influencing the basis of family formation through the portrayal of romantic values by offering guidance on family problems, by redefining parental roles and reinforcing the prerogatives of children, and by creating new choice points in the budgeting of family recreational activities.

3. Mass communication, coupled with mass production, has magnified material values, created "thing" consciousness, and generally elevated the perception of the importance of the economic sphere (1964: 353).

Klapper, in his approach to the question of the impact of television, cautions that one must assess stimuli in terms of their contributions along with other influences operating in the same total observed situation. He proposes:

> The efficiency of mass communication, either as a contributory agent or as an agent of direct action, is affected by various aspects of the media and com-

> munications themselves or of the communication setting (the nature of the source and medium, the existing climate of public opinion, etc.) (1960: 8)

Schramm is in agreement with Klapper when he indicates that "Mass communication never acts by itself on an individual. Whatever effect mass communication has, it will have jointly with other determining forces, of which the most important two are the individual's personality resources and his group relationships" (1957: 53, 54). The idea of a mass audience ". . . an audience of separated individuals, receiving mass communication like a hypodermic needle under their individual skins, and reacting to it . . . " is just not the case (Schramm, 1957: 54).

In 1972, the National Institute of Mental Health published a five volume set of articles entitled Television and Social Behavior . These research findings presented clearly the ongoing controversy, confusion and misunderstanding that exists concerning the impact of television.

Noting all the methodological, theoretical, and other problems associated with television studies, it is apparent that television does have some impact on some people in some situations. Much research into the impact of television has dealt with its violent content. Since ". . . it has been shown convincingly that children are exposed to a substantial amount of violent content on television, and that they can remember and learn from such exposure. . ." (Liebert, 1972: 29 , many attempts have been made to test the matter of effects. Two key questions concern whether or not a viewer will acquire and subsequently accept televised behaviors. Acquisition is the ability to reproduce previously unfamiliar acts as a consequence of observational learning. Acceptance is the adoption of some behavior patterns, learned from observation that may be utilized by the observer at some future time. Liebert notes:

> If a child has learned some new behavior, then he clearly possesses the potential to produce it if (or when) he finds himself in a situation in which such a performance appears to be desirable, useful, or likely to serve his own purposes. Thus, although learning does not necessarily lead to action, it does make possible the performance of otherwise unavailable forms of social responses. (1972: 3)

Stevenson, in writing about the impact of Sesame Street, indicates that positive as well as negative materials may be learned from television. "We now know that television programs can be designed to be attractive to preschool children and to lead to positive effects on their cognitive development." (1972:346) Not all the projects have been limited to children. LoSciuto (1972) found that some of the adults in his sample felt they learned about the world, how to handle social situations, and how to cope with some personal problems. Many also felt that television dramas reflected life realistically. Furthermore, some parents used examples shown on television programs as models of support in interaction with children.

In terms of patterns of television use, LoSciuto found:

> Over 60% (of 252 families) listed entertainment and relaxation as the major reason for viewing. Another 18% said to 'kill time'. A minority (8%) said 'to keep up with what was going on' and 4% said that they were participating in a learning or self-improvement experience. Such reasons became even more prominent in second and third reasons for viewing. It would appear therefore, that a substantial minority of viewers feel that their television viewing is not entirely a frivolous or escapist use of time (1972: 59)

In pursuing the question of learning from television viewing, LoSciuto (1972: 72) reports that his respondents most often reported that they learned how to solve problems. In the case of soap operas, it was one's own problems.

The amount of realism portrayed is an important variable in determining whether or not television viewers will acquire and/or accept

broadcast materials. On this matter LoSciuto reports:

> Twice as many respondents (60%) said their favorite programs showed 'life as it really is' than did not (30%); the remaining 10% claimed it was only partially realistic. When asked to explain their answer about programs being realistic, the majority pointed out that things like this happen in real life . . . . If many of these shows are drama or situation comedies, the fiction is evidently capable of yielding perceived insight into everyday real world transactions (1972: 72).

Katzman (1972) on the potential impact of television serials notes:

> The almost realism of the character and themes, the repetition due to slow pace, and the extremely large number of hours spent viewing soap operas indicate that these shows have great potential power. They can establish or reinforce value systems. They can legitimize behavior and remove taboos about discussing sensitive topics such as drugs and premarital sex (212).

Christenson, commenting on the materials presented by mass communication, notes:

> Whether it be via newspaper, magazines, books, motion pictures, radio or television, modern man is being bombarded almost constantly with facts, ideas, persuasion, and emotional stimulations of one sort or another . . . . Since sex, love, marriage, and parenthood are intrinsically interesting, it is understandable that a large proportion of the mass communication barrage is directed toward the family. Almost every publication one reads or program one hears or sees contains <u>some thing</u> on a family related theme. (Emphasis Christenson's). At their best, these outpourings both inform and motivate the consuming public toward accepted goals in family; at the worst they only distort and destroy. Of course, the great bulk of what is offered lies somewhere between these two extremes (1964: 978).

There is an overlapping of fiction and reality in the television fare that has not been given the thorough investigation it deserves, especially when one considers the ubiquity of and attention presently given television. The need for analyses of television content becomes extremely important if one assumes that many viewers can acquire new behavior patterns and accept them as behavioral models in their own

social interaction. The amount of realism (telling it like it is) perceived by the viewer is a very important variable in determining how much, if any, material one acquires and accepts. Below are the results of an analysis of one week's television fare which investigated the amount of realism in programs portraying contemporary marital and family settings.

PROCEDURES

During one week in January 1973, 59 programs were video-taped and their contents analyzed to discern the televised marital and parental role behavior. This time period was selected so as to be late enough in the television programming season to exclude shows already dropped by the networks as well as early enough to avoid "repeats". For three weeks prior to the actual sample collection, saturation viewing was done to locate (in terms of time and network) those programs which portrayed contemporary American marriages and families. Programs which had as their time setting present American society as opposed to the colonial, the frontier or the days of the "Great Depression" were defined as "contemporary." After discerning which programs composed the universe under consideration, each program was assigned a number. From these was selected a modified random sample. Because of limited video taping facilities, it was not possible to tape more than one show at any given time period. In cases where selected programs conflicted in broadcast time, they were again randomly drawn to select only one program.

Table I

Subject-matter broadcast by networks and type of program in exclusive hours and minutes[a]

	NETWORKS							
	CBS		NBC		ABC		Total	
TYPE of Program	Hours	Minutes	Hours	Minutes	Hours	Minutes	Hours	Minutes
Serials	7:17	437	3:02	182	1:06	66	10:25	685
Movies	1:29	89	1:28	88	1:06	66	4:01	241
Light Situation Comedies	2:23	163	1:56	116	1:57	117	6:36	396
Studio Quiz						20		20
Prestige Drama						54		54
Total	11:29	689	6:26	386	5:23	323	23:18	1398

[a]Contains no commercials, irrelevant "leads", "tails", or credits

These 59 recordings were of 29 distinct broadcasts composing five types of television programs: serials, light situation comedies, movies, studio quiz, and dramatic programs. Respective examples include: "Days of Our Lives," "The Paul Lynde Show," "Diary of a Mad Housewife," "The Newlywed Game," and "Owen Marshall: Counselor at Law." Daily broadcasts are typical of the serials and some light situation comedies. Therefore, 37 broadcasts of the serials, 17 light comedies, 3 movies and 1 each of studio-quiz and dramatic programs made up the total sample analyzed.

Programs produced only by the three national networks were included in the sample; no local station produced such programs. CBS had 35 programs, NBC 14, and ABC, 10. In terms of exclusive minutes (no leads, tails, or credits included), these programs contained 1396 minutes (23 hours, 16 minutes) of contemporary marital and parental interaction. Table I indicates the exclusive number of minutes broadcast by networks and types of programs.

Table I here

Each program was video taped and its content coded by means of an instrument listing contemporary marital and parental roles. This instrument was developed with the assistance of several classes in sociology of the family at a large midwestern university. These classes, composed of mostly unmarried undergraduates with a variety of academic majors, were asked to indicate what they considered to be contemporary, normal and typical behaviors of husbands-wives and fathers-mothers. Because of the open-ended nature of their responses, it was necessary for us to reduce and compact their responses into a manageable list. Those behaviors most frequently mentioned composed the instrument. The frequency of each act was enumerated as well as the source of the behavior; i.e., the act originated with the husband and was directed to his wife or children. These specific frequencies will not be discussed here; rather the present discussion is limited to the realism of televised marital and familial roles.

How realistic are marital and parental roles on television? To what degree do television programs portraying contemporary American marriages and families "tell it like it is?" Realism for the purpose of this investigation is defined as acts reflecting people's actual marital and familial behavior in a sensible and ordinary manner. The behaviors listed by the student sample were by their definition normal and realistic. This question of the realism between the world of the viewer and television's portrayal is extremely important because of the dual assumptions that television can influence behavior and thereby influence society as well as individual viewers. In other words, it is possible that not only do viewers acquire televised behavior patterns but they might also adopt them in their own daily lives. Furthermore, if one were to view the television medium as a component of society, functional questions as to its consequences both

for the viewers and society can be formulated. As was previously noted by LoSciuto (1972), many viewers perceive television programs to be realistic and some specifically watch and learn from them.

At this time a gap exists in the literature as to what marital and parental role behaviors are being televised as well as those that might be acquired and or adopted as models of marital and parental behavior. The following discussion aims at supplying some answers as to television content in the area of concern.

DISCUSSION

The role behaviors indicated by the recording instrument were compared to a middle-class sample's inventory of role behaviors done by Hurvitz (1961). This inventory was assumed to be exemplary of role behavior in the average American middle-class family. To the degree that televised marital and parental role behavior coincide with those of Hurvitz's sample, one can assess their degree of realism (at least as far as middle-class standards are concerned).

Role behaviors of the husband according to Hurvitz's sample (these behaviors are underlined to facilitate comparison) include his doing his jobs around the house. These include yard work, various repairs, and other masculine type jobs. Also he is to display an interest in making the house pleasant to live in. (Similar behaviors were found in an urban American family sample by Silverman and Hill) (1967). Such acts accounted for a small minority of all marital and parental behavior portrayed. In one program, a husband took out the garbage once because his wife asked him to. Routine daily household responsibilities of middle-class husbands are absent from the role behaviors of televised husbands. Rather they are portrayed as having no household duties or responsibilities.

The husband is a companion to his wife, sharing his leisure time with

her, rather than with children or friends, displaying an interest in what she is doing, refraining from ridicule or abuse of her, seeking to help her fulfill herself, and viewing her as a confidante with whom he can discuss various matters. Televised role behaviors are very similar. Television husbands display an interest in the wife's activities, express their concern for their wife's well being, demonstrate verbal and physical affection, and participate in recreational activities with their spouses. Fifty percent (174) of all the behaviors initiated by the husband were classified as displaying verbal and physical affection and concern toward the wife. Furthermore, television husbands assisted, complimented, comforted and discussed various matters with their spouses. Hurvitz's role behaviors do not include any violent behavior on the part of the middle-class husband; they refrain from abuse and ridicule of their wife. Only two acts out of 359 enumerated could be classified as violent and these were only verbal threats.

Middle class husbands assist the children in thier development by being their friend, teacher and guide. This involves leisure-time activities, helping with school work, peer problems, etc. He uses punishment understandingly and disciplines in relationship to the situation, avoiding abuse of the children. Television fathers do likewise. Although scenes portraying parent-child interactions were much less frequent than husband-wife, those broadcast depicted fathers displaying affection toward their children, participating in recreational activities, and displaying concern for children's activities and interests. Television fathers were the chief disciplinarians; however, no father physically hit a child. Discipline was being "sent to bed" or being "scolded".

Middle class husbands earn the living and support the family. Husbands on televion likewise are the primary breadwinners.

Husbands do their wife's work around the house if his help is needed.

Such times would be when the wife was ill or required by special circumstances. No such acts were displayed by the television husbands.

Being a sexual partner to his wife is another middle-class husband's role behavior. He gains as well as gives sexual satisfaction with his wife, not showing sexual interest in other women. Other than kissing, there were no acts typifying sexual interaction between spouses in the television sample. The television husbands did, however, display attention and affection both verbally and physically toward thier wives. Contrary to middle class expectations, there were two displays of extra-marital interest. These were implied to be sexual in nature, but were, of course, not displayed. In this one area, behavior of television husbands is in contradiction to middle-class norms.

If the family is still divided after discussing a given issue, the middle-class husband decides. The husband is recognized and referred to by his wife as the decision-maker, casting the "tie-breaking vote" when needed. Televised behaviors on this matter do not show the husband to be patriarchal but equalitarian, sharing the decision-making with his spouse. Nor would it appear that the middle-class husband is a patriarch. Therefore, television husbands are similar in this respect.

Managing the family income and finances is the responsibility of the husband. Bringing home the money, planning for its use, subordinating his immediate needs for the long range goals of the family, and developing plans for future family security are also his duties. Husbands on television display more concern over financial matters than do wives. In all other ways, the duties of television husbands as a money manager are neglected.

Finally, the middle-class husband represents and advances his family in the community. In this area the husband wants the family to "get ahead" and avoid dependence on others. The husband holds attitudes and values consistent with community standards. By omitting acts to the contrary,

television husbands are consistent with middle-class norms. Only by inference can one state that television husbands depict similar behavior. It can be observed from table II that the role behaviors of many middle-class husbands are displayed on television. As indicated, there are some notable exceptions. Nevertheless, it can be stated that television husbands do display behaviors that are typical of middle-class husbands. Furthermore, one can speculate that for many viewers, the behaviors displayed by television husbands are real and meaningful for them. The social history of the viewer, his unique set of predispositions, and his group setting may affect his perception and interpretation of the behaviors of the television husbands. Therefore, the effects of these portrayals must remain hypothetical at this time.

Table II here

TABLE II

Middle-class husbands' role behaviors as compared to television husbands' role behaviors

MIDDLE-CLASS HUSBANDS	TELEVISION HUSBANDS
Do Household Jobs	Refrain from doing household tasks
Companion to Wife	Companion to Wife
Assist Children's Development	Assist Children's Development
Earn Living	Earn Living
Do Wife's Work	Do NOT do Wife's Work
Display Family Religion	Do NOT display Family Religion
Sexual Partner to Wife	Are NOT sexual partners
Decision-Maker	Equalitarian Decision-Maker
Manage Family Income	Manage Family Income
Advance Family in Community	Advance Family in Community
	Complain about Spouse
	Commit Few Violent Acts
	Engage in Few Extra-Marital Acts
	Display jealousy
	Leave Spouse
	Argue with Spouse

The realism of the television wives' role behaviors can likewise be investigated. The middle-class wife helps earn the living when her husband needs her help or when the family needs more money. Wives accept the job of breadwinner temporarily in cases of illness or husband's incapacitation. Such was not the case with television wives. There were portrayals of working wives, but in none was it apparent that she had to work to assist her husband. Of necessity, divorced or widowed femals were working. Television wives who were working were doing so because they wanted to and not because of financial circumstances. There were also no indications that any of the working wives wanted to become the primary breadwinner of the family.

Middle-class wives also display the family religion, giving the children an understanding of the family's religious identification. Television wives do not display such acts.

Caring for the children's everyday needs includes clothing, feeding, transportation, supervision of play activities, etc. Television wives/mothers do likewise. However, mother-child interaction on television is much less frequent than these writers believe takes place in the real world. By omission of this interaction, television does not emphasize the reality of parent-child interaction. The daily reoutines and often monotonous duties of motherhood are not often televised. In this way, the wife/mother of television does not portray a totally realistic picture of the middle-class wife as homemaker.

The middle-class wife is also to be a sexual partner to her husband giving as well as gaining sexual satisfaction with him. She is not interested in sexual relations with other men, nor does she use the sexual relationship to manipulate her husband. She desires to hold her husband's sexual interest. All of the television wives displayed behaviors consonant with these expectations. However, as was true for television husbands, a small

minority of television wives also displayed extra-marital affairs limited to kissing with implied further sexual involvements. Television wives depicted no more sexual involvement than kissing even with their husbands. A corollary of this set of expectations, middle-class wives as well as television wives displayed an interest in having children with their husband. Television wives are in agreement with and supportive of the middle-class wives' desire for children.

Serving as a model of women for the children entails being also a model of what a wife and mother is to be. She is well organized, refraining from deviant behavior such as alcoholism, criminality, etc. She accepts a limited range of extra-familial duties and responsibilities, believing it to be more important to spend most of her time within the family unit. Also she believes it to be more desirable to be married an rear a family than not. Television wives display acts consonant with these expectations.

Middle-class wives are to help the children grow by being their friend, teacher, and guide, by participating in their world, by spending leisure-time together, assisting with school work, etc. Also they are to use punishment understandingly, refraining from abuse and ridicule of the children. Television mothers display verbal and physical affection to their children, display concern, play with their children, comfort and assist them, as well as discussing with their children a wide range of concerns. Television mothers generally discipline in accordance with middle-class expectations. There were three violent acts perpetrated by television mothers toward their children; but, again, the definition of violence is quite broad so as to include spankings, slaps, and threats of corporal punishment.

The middle class wife is a companion to her husband. She shares her activities, free time, and thoughts with him. She demonstrates an interest

in his occupation, his problems, etc. Abuse and ridicule of her husband by the middle-class wife is atypical. Television wives behave in similar fashion. They express concern for their husbands, display verbal and phusical affection, and joke and tease their spouse. Although television wives also complain about their husbands, they, too, apologize for such behavior. They also refrain from abuse and ridicule.

Television wives display concern for the management of the family income and finances. These behaviors are expected according to the Hurvitz sample.

Finally, the middle-class wife decides when the family is still divided after a discussion. Although this sounds identical to the role behavior of middle-class husbands, (how can there be two final decision-makers?) Hurvitz notes that the middle-class wife "...is recognized, acknowledged, and deferred to by her husband and children as the decision-maker about family affairs" (1961: 178). Television wives are portrayed as being equal to their husbands in making decisions. However, the role set of Hurvitz's sample is almost identical (with the use of "deferred" instead of "referred") to that of the middle-class husbands, though these writers have reservations as to the accuracy of the clerical reporting of the findings (the substitution of an "r" makes the reading identical to that of the husband). Nevertheless, assuming no typographical errors, two answers are possible. On the one hand, the middle-class wife may actually be the decision-maker in the family, or the husband and wife may have their own areas of decision-making with the family decisions falling within the wife's domain of responsibility. As noted previously, television families decided issues in an equalitarian manner. Wives as well as husbands have an equal voice on television. Each make decisions for and which affect the other spouse.

As was true for television husbands, television wives display role

behaviors that are generally consonant with middle-class expectations. With the noted exceptions, television wives are behaving according to middle-class norms. Table III summarizes television wives roles as well as those of middle-class wives.

Table III here

Table III

Middle-class wives' role behaviors as compared to television wives' role behaviors

MIDDLE-CLASS WIVES	TELEVISION WIVES
Help Earn Living if Needed	Work because they want to
Display Family Religion	Do NOT Display Family Religion
Care for Children's Routine Needs	Infrequently care for Children's Routine Needs
Do household chores	Infrequently do household chores
Are Sexual Partner to Husband	Are NOT sexual partners
Desire Children	Desire Children
Are Models of Women for Children	Are Model of Women for Children
Assist Development of Children	Assist Development of Children
Are Companions to Husbands	Are Companions to Husbands
Assist in Managing Family Income	Assist in Managing Family Income
Are Decision Makers	Are Decision Makers
	Complain about Husband
	Display few Violent Acts
	Display few extra-marital acts
	Display Jealousy
	Leave Spouse
	Argue with Spouse

The data derived from this content analysis are important in that they can serve as the basis for several avenues of exploration. Although they were derived from fictional television programs, the content may be perceived to be real by many viewers. The similarity and consistency of television's portrayals of marital and familial acts with those of a middle class inventory of such role behaviors add credence to such assumptions. To the degree that viewers perceive televised role behaviors to be realistic, they can serve as behavioral models. Viewers might use such television programs as a source of solutions to marital and familial problems.

Another area of interest centers on television as a socializing agent. It may be possible with greater geographical distances and changing times and ideas between the family of procreation and the family of orientation that television provides a model for marital and familial interaction? What are the relationships between the amount and type of television viewing and marital happiness? What are children learning from television's portrayals of marital and familial life? What are the effects of such viewing on children in the anticipatory socialization aspects? Many such research problems remain to be explored; hopefully this exploratory study can generate attempts to provide some answers.

References

Anders, Gunther
1957 "The phantom world of T.V." Pp. 358-367 in Bernard Rosenberg and David White (eds), Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America. New York: The Free Press.

Appell, Clara T.
1963 "T.V. Viewing and the Pre-School Child." Marriage and Family Living 25 (August): 311-318.

Christenson, Harold
1964 Handbook of Marriage and Family. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Hurvitz, Nathan
1961 "The components of marital roles." Pp. 172-179 in Jacqueline Wiseman (ed.) People As Partners. San Francisco: Canfield Press.

Katzman, N.
1972 "Television soap operas: What's been going on anyway?" Public Opinion Quarterly 36 (Summer): 200-213.

Klapper, J.T.
1960 The Effects of Mass Communications. Glencoe; Illinois: Glencoe Free Press.

Larsen, Otto
1964 "Social effects of mass communication." Pp. 353-360 in R. Faris (ed.), Handbook of Modern Sociology. Chicago: Rand McNally.

LeMasters, E.E.
1957 "Parenthood as crisis." Marriage and Family Living 79 (November): 352-355.

1970 Parents in Modern America: A Sociological Analysis. Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press.

Liebert, Robert
1972 Television & Social Learning: Some Relationships Between Viewing Violence and Behaving Aggressively. In E. Rubinstein and G. Comstock, Television and Social Behavior; Vol. II Television and Social Learning. Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office.

Liebert, Robert, John Neale and Emily Davidson
1973 The Early Window. New York: Pergamon Press

Looney, Gerald
1971 "T.V. time spent by tots outlasts going to college." Des Moines Register, Des Moines, Iowa, October 18:4.

LoSciuto, Leonard
1972 "A national inventory of television viewing behavior." Pp. 33-86 in G. Comstock (ed.), Television and Social Behavior, IV. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Meyersohn, Rolf
1957 "Social research in television." Pp. 345-357 in B. Rosenberg and David White (eds.), Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America. New York: The Free Press

Rosenberg, Berrard and David White
1957 Mass Culture: The Popular Arts in America. New York: The Free Press

Schramm, Wilber
1957 Responsibility in Mass Communication. New York: Harper and Row.

Silverman, William, and Reuben Hill
1967 "Task Allocation in marriage in the United States and Belgium." Journal of Marriage and Family 29 (May): 353-359

Statistical Abstract
1972 U.S. Bureau of the Census. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Stevenson, Harold
1972 "Television and the behavior of pre-school children. Pp. 346-369 in G. Comstock (ed.), Television and Social Behavior, II. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.